



Linguopragmatic features of irony: A comparative study based on English and Uzbek languages

Лингвопрагматические особенности иронии на основе сравнительного исследования английского и узбекского языков

Kinoyaning lingvopragmatik xususiyatlari ingliz va o‘zbek tillari asosida chog‘ishtirma tadqiq

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Annotation. This research explores the linguopragmatic features of irony through a comparative analysis of the English and Uzbek languages. Irony, as a subtle and multilayered communicative device, functions not only on a lexical level but also through pragmatic cues such as tone, context, and cultural expectations. The study examines how irony is formed, interpreted, and conveyed in both languages, focusing on pragmatic strategies like implicature, presupposition, and context-dependent meaning. It also highlights the cultural norms that influence the use of irony, showing how English often employs more explicit sarcasm, while Uzbek prefers indirect and ethically framed kinoya. Through the analysis of authentic examples from literary texts and conversational discourse, the research identifies key similarities and differences in the pragmatic realization of irony and discusses the implications for translation, language teaching, and intercultural communication.

Key words: Irony, linguopragmatics, cross-cultural communication, English literature, Uzbek literature, verbal irony, kinoya, translation of irony, Mona Baker, pragmatic equivalence, cultural adaptation, figurative language, indirect speech acts, stylistic contrast, intercultural pragmatics.

Аннотация. Данное исследование посвящено лингвопрагматическим особенностям иронии на основе сравнительного анализа английского и узбекского языков. Ирония рассматривается как сложное многослойное явление, реализующееся не только на лексическом, но и на прагматическом уровне — через интонацию, контекст и культурные ожидания. Исследование выявляет, что в английском языке ирония часто выражается явно и саркастично, тогда как в узбекском языке она представлена более мягко, косвенно и в рамках этических норм. На основе анализа литературных текстов и примеров из разговорной речи выявляются сходства и различия в прагматической реализации иронии, а также делаются выводы о её роли в переводе, преподавании языков и межкультурной коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: Ирония, лингвопрагматика, межкультурная коммуникация, английская литература, узбекская литература, вербальная ирония, киноя, перевод иронии, Мона Бейкер, прагматический эквивалент, культурная адаптация, образный язык, косвенные речевые акты, стилистический контраст, межкультурная прагматика.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz va o‘zbek tillarida kinoyaning lingvopragmatik xususiyatlarini chog‘ishtirma tahlil asosida o‘rganadi. Kinoya faqat so‘z darajasida emas, balki kontekst, ohang, madaniy kutishlar kabi pragmatik omillar orqali ham ifodalanadigan nozik va



ko'p qatlamli muloqot vositasidir. Tadqiqotda ingliz tilida kinoyaning ko'proq ochiq va sarkastik shakllarda namoyon bo'lishi, o'zbek tilida esa kinoya odatda bilvosita va axloqiy-estetik doirada ifodalanishi ta'kidlanadi. Adabiy matnlar va muloqot nutqi misollariga tayanilgan holda, kinoyaning har ikki til pragmatik tizimidagi o'rni, ifoda shakllari va madaniy o'ziga xosliklari ochib beriladi. Tadqiqot natijalari tarjima, til o'qitish va madaniyatlararo muloqot sohalarida amaliy ahamiyatga ega bo'lishi mumkin.

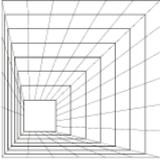
Kalit so'zlar: Kinoya, lingvopragmatika, madaniyatlararo muloqot, ingliz adabiyoti, o'zbek adabiyoti, og'zaki kinoya, kinoya (uzbekcha), kinoyani tarjima qilish, Mona Beyker, pragmatik ekvivalentlik, madaniy moslashuv, badiiy ifoda, bilvosita nutq aktlari, uslubiy tafovut, madaniyatlararo pragmatika.

Introduction. Irony is one of the most subtle and context-dependent forms of human communication, operating at the intersection of language, pragmatics, and culture. As a phenomenon, it relies not only on the literal content of an utterance but also on the speaker's intent, the listener's ability to interpret hidden meanings, and the shared assumptions embedded in a given communicative situation. In both everyday speech and literary discourse, irony serves a variety of functions — from humor and satire to criticism and social commentary. However, its linguopragmatic realization can differ significantly across languages due to cultural norms, rhetorical traditions, and linguistic structures[1]. In English, irony — especially verbal irony — is often expressed through sarcasm, understatement, or contradiction, and is widely used in both informal and literary contexts. English speakers frequently rely on explicit pragmatic markers such as tone, exaggerated wording, or incongruent context to signal irony. Meanwhile, the Uzbek language draws on a tradition rooted in poetic allegory, cultural modesty (odob), and indirectness. Here, irony (kinoya) is often conveyed through refined metaphor, symbolic opposition, or exaggerated praise — rarely through direct sarcasm. This stylistic and pragmatic contrast presents an opportunity to explore how different linguistic and cultural systems encode and interpret ironic meaning. The present study focuses on the linguopragmatic features of irony in English and Uzbek, aiming to identify both universal and language-specific patterns. It draws on examples from literary texts, conversational discourse, and rhetorical usage to analyze how irony is constructed through pragmatic tools such as implicature, presupposition, intonation, and contextual framing. Special attention is given to how these mechanisms reflect each culture's communicative etiquette and cognitive expectations.[2] Understanding these differences is essential not only for comparative linguistics and translation studies but also for improving intercultural communication. Irony often fails when transferred across languages, not because of vocabulary, but due to a mismatch in pragmatic conventions and interpretive frameworks. By comparing English and Uzbek, this research sheds light on how irony can be more effectively identified, interpreted, and even translated — without losing its intended impact or tone.

Literature review. Irony has been widely studied across disciplines such as linguistics, literary studies, pragmatics, and translation theory. Scholars generally agree that irony is not merely a stylistic ornament but a pragmatic strategy that relies on indirectness, contrast between literal and intended meaning, and the listener's inferential ability. In both English and Uzbek contexts, irony reflects deeper cultural and communicative norms, but the way it is encoded and interpreted varies significantly. In English-language pragmatics, irony is often categorized into types such as verbal irony, situational irony, and dramatic irony. Research shows that verbal irony is commonly expressed through overt contrast between what is said and what is meant. Pragmatic theorists explain that irony often functions through implicature (an implied meaning not directly stated) and contextual framing, where cues such as tone, facial expression, or exaggeration help the listener identify the ironic intent. English speakers often



rely on sarcasm, understatement, and parody as mechanisms to express ironic criticism or humor. These tools are deeply embedded in Western rhetorical culture, where directness and individual expression are generally accepted and even valued. In contrast, Uzbek linguistics and literary criticism emphasize that kinoya (Uzbek term for irony) functions within a different communicative and cultural framework. Irony in Uzbek discourse is frequently shaped by the values of modesty (odob), indirectness, and poetic subtlety. Scholars of Uzbek classical literature note that kinoya often appears in the form of exaggerated praise, symbolic opposition, or allegorical contrast, especially in the works of Alisher Navoiy and other classical poets. In modern usage, irony continues to be expressed in indirect forms, particularly in written language and formal discourse. It is less confrontational and more reflective, often aimed at ethical reflection rather than social ridicule. From a linguopragmatic standpoint, several Uzbek researchers highlight the difficulty of interpreting kinoya without contextual awareness. While English irony may be signaled through prosodic or lexical markers (tone, stress, sarcasm), [6] Uzbek irony often relies on shared cultural knowledge, moral undertones, and narrative structure. This distinction makes the comparative study of irony particularly relevant in translation and cross-cultural communication. Comparative studies between English and Uzbek irony remain relatively limited. However, available research indicates that ironic meaning is rarely transferable through direct translation due to differences in pragmatic conventions, discourse strategies, and cultural expectations. Instead, irony must be reconstructed in the target language using functionally equivalent forms. This has implications for literary translation, language pedagogy, and intercultural pragmatics. When we start to analyze Mona Baker is a well-known scholar in the field of translation studies. In her book *In Other Words*, she explains how meaning in language is not only based on words, but also on context, culture, and intention. This is especially important when translating irony, because irony often says one thing but means another. According to Baker, if irony is not translated carefully, the reader may: Take it literally (think it's serious, not ironic), Miss the joke or the criticism, Misunderstand the tone or message. This can cause the loss of meaning, especially in literary texts or political satire. [7] That's why she believes translators must think about tone, purpose, and audience. Baker explains that translators should not always use word-for-word translation. Instead, they should look for a way to express the same function or effect in the target language. This is especially true for irony, which depends on shared cultural knowledge. [3] In Uzbek, irony (kinoya) is often hidden and respectful, while in English it can be sharp and direct. A good translator must adapt the ironic meaning to fit Uzbek culture and communication style. *"Oh great, another meeting that could've been an email."* A frustrated employee says this sarcastically after being forced to attend a boring, unnecessary meeting. The speaker is happy about the meeting. The meaning of ironic is the speaker is annoyed because the meeting was useless and a waste of time. We strongly agree with Mona Baker's position that irony cannot be translated literally and that translators must focus on the function and effect of language, not just its surface form. Her approach is especially valuable for languages like Uzbek, where cultural values such as respect, modesty (odob), and indirectness shape how irony is understood and expressed. In English, irony often appears as sharp sarcasm or direct contradiction, and it's common even in casual speech. But in Uzbek, irony tends to be softer, symbolic, and more respectful, especially in formal or literary contexts. That's why Baker's emphasis on pragmatic equivalence—preserving the meaning and emotional effect, even if the words change—is extremely relevant. She reminds us that irony is not just linguistic, but cultural. You can't assume readers in another language will "get" the irony unless it is adapted to their way of thinking. That's why her model gives translators the freedom to be creative—but with responsibility—to rebuild the irony in a way the new audience will



understand.[5]

Conclusion. Irony is one of the most context-dependent and culturally sensitive features of language, requiring not only linguistic knowledge but also a deep understanding of pragmatic intention and cultural worldview. This research has shown that while irony exists in both English and Uzbek discourse, its expression, recognition, and interpretation differ significantly due to the distinct linguopragmatic systems and cultural norms of each language.[4] In English, irony—particularly verbal irony—is often direct, overt, and frequently used as a tool for criticism, humor, or satire. It relies on explicit pragmatic cues such as exaggeration, contradiction, or sarcastic tone. These features are rooted in a rhetorical tradition that values individual expression and open critique. In contrast, Uzbek irony (*kinoya*) follows a more implicit, refined, and ethical mode of expression, shaped by cultural values such as *odob* (etiquette) and modesty. Irony in Uzbek often appears in poetic language, allegory, or exaggerated praise, and it seeks to gently guide the reader or listener toward reflection rather than confrontation. The comparison also highlights that irony cannot be treated as a universal structure with fixed linguistic indicators. Rather, it must be understood as a communicative act that depends on shared cultural knowledge, pragmatic expectations, and social norms. The ideas of Mona Baker are particularly helpful in this regard, as she stresses the importance of preserving the function and effect of ironic expressions in translation, even if the form must change. Similarly, scholars like Botir Matkarimov emphasize the role of irony in Uzbek literature as a morally loaded and culturally grounded tool of critique.[2] This research underscores that irony is more than a stylistic device—it is a mirror of society, reflecting how different cultures express judgment, humor, and reflection. In translation and comparative analysis, it is essential not only to recognize irony in the source language but also to know how to reconstruct its meaning in the target language so that it resonates with the audience in the same way. This requires a high level of cultural and pragmatic awareness. In conclusion, studying irony from a linguopragmatic perspective across English and Uzbek not only deepens our understanding of each language's expressive capacity, but also strengthens intercultural communication and translation strategies. It reminds us that irony, though universal in human communication, is locally shaped, and its survival across languages depends on our ability to listen not just to words, but to meanings beyond them.

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